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ABSTRACT

Described are the plans and non-categorical special education program toward which Texas school districts will move. The program is designed to provide services to handicapped children (age range 3 to 21 years) in sparsely populated rural areas as well as heavily populated areas. All Texas school districts will adopt the new program by 1976. In the new program, teachers, teacher aides, and support personnel are awarded on the basis of a formula arrived at by determining the average daily attendance for either the district or cooperative district. The formula provides financial incentive for school districts to move to the new plan. The state plan for comprehensive special education is described to include the following: basic personnel allocations; financial allotment for initial appraisal and reappraisal of pupils considered for or receiving special education; financial allotment for special education instructional materials; provision of necessary transportation facilities for all handicapped children; provision of special seats for the students; electronic communication services for homebound pupils; cooperative and joint agreements between two or more school districts; contracts with non-public schools; and allocation for consultant services. (CB)

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TEXAS PLAN "A"
TWO EMERGING MODELS FOR PROVISION OF SERVICES TO THE HANDICAPPED IN SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS

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Texas Plan "A" is an effort by the Texas Education Agency to move from a categorical approach to a non-categorical approach in the education of exceptional children in Texas. Movement to Plan "A" by all school districts in Texas is mandatory by 1976 and is being developed in a step by step progression according to a state master plan.

School districts are encouraged to plan and move into Plan "A" from the older plan "B" formula of funding by categories as rapidly as possible. Each school district must develop a five year comprehensive plan for special education to participate in state funding. This plan serves as a guide to future development within that district and is revised and expanded each year. It is also required that a district have 3,000 pupils in average daily attendance (ADA) or join a cooperative district to form this 3,000 pupil base.

Teachers, teacher aides, and support personnel are awarded on the basis of formula arrived at by determining the ADA for either the district or cooperative district. The formula is relatively well financed and provides a financial incentive for school districts to move from Plan "B" to the new Plan "A".

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I have chosen two Texas school districts for our consideration at this meeting. These two districts have strong leadership in the area of planning and the movement toward Plan "A" has been rapid. These two models for provision of comprehensive special education services under Plan "A" will give you a basic idea of the transition taking place in the school districts of Texas and the provision of services to all exceptional pupils between 3-21 CA in the rural and sparsely populated areas within the state.

Both of these districts are cooperative districts made up of a rather large school district serving as fiscal agent and pro-

viding the administrative leadership for the cooperative district programs.

Palestine Cooperative Special Education District

The Palestine Cooperative Special Education District has applied for change from Plan "B" to Plan "A" status during the 1972-73 academic year. The cooperative school district developed for this cooperative consists of five school districts located in Anderson County, Texas. Four districts, as shown on the attached map of Anderson County, are not at this time participating in the Special Education Cooperative. Every effort is being made to involve these and other districts in the cooperative as the program develops and services are expanded. It is mandatory that these four districts be a part of the Palestine Cooperative Special Education District by September, 1976 or establish membership in a similiar cooperative by that date.

The total average daily attendance for the cooperative district is 5,336 pupils well above the 3,000 pupil minimum base. If Plan "A" is approved for the Palestine Cooperative Special Education District, the following types of personnel will be allocated by the Texas Education Agency to serve the cooperative district:

1. Thirty-four Special Education Teachers

2. Twelve Teacher Aides

3. Six Support Personnel

This will be a rather dramatic increase in personnel available to staff the needs of the exceptional pupils in the cooperative district. Under the present Plan "B" formula the Palestine Cooperative Special Education District has the following personnel:

1. Twenty-five Special Education Teachers

2. Five Teacher Aides

3. Two Support Personnel

School districts are encouraged to expand their services under Plan "B" to the point that the demands for increased staff personnel and services will be feasible without being traumatic to the cooperative district. East Texas State University is providing teacher education support and consultancy services to make this transition as efficient as possible.

The Palestine Cooperative Special Education District now operates the following services in addition to their regular Special Education Program:

1. Diagnostic and Evaluation Center
2. Mobile Speech Clinic
3. Mobile Reading Laboratory - Elementary - LD
4. Multi-Media Resource Center - High School - LD
5. Multi-Media Resource Center - Junior High - LD

Bonham Cooperative Special Education District

The Bonham Cooperative Special Education District has applied for admission into Plan "A" during the 1973-74 school year. The Bonham Cooperative Special Education District is made up of ten cooperating school districts in Fannin County, Texas. The ten school districts make up most of the area of the county.

The attached map of Fannin County indicates the names and ADA for the ten participating districts. Bonham Independent School District will serve as fiscal agent for the cooperative district and will provide housing for the administration of the cooperative special education district.

Total ADA for the Bonham Cooperative Special Education District is 4,753 pupils. Under Plan "A" this will allow them the following personnel:

1. Thirty-one Special Education Teachers
2. Eleven Teacher Aides
3. Five Support Personnel

The Bonham Cooperative Special Education District has the following personnel in on going programs:

1. Nine Special Education Teachers
2. One Teacher Aide
3. One-half Support Personnel

Henderson County

Non-participating districts

Cayuga ISD

La Poynor ISD

Frankston ISD

Palestine ISD
3,554 ADA

Neches ISD
195 ADA

Cherokee County

Total ADA
5,336

Plan "A" 1972-73
Teachers 34
Aides 12
Support 6

Anderson County

Freestone County

Tucker ISD
787 ADA

Maydell ISD

Elkhart ISD
618 ADA

Slocum ISD
182 ADA

Leon County

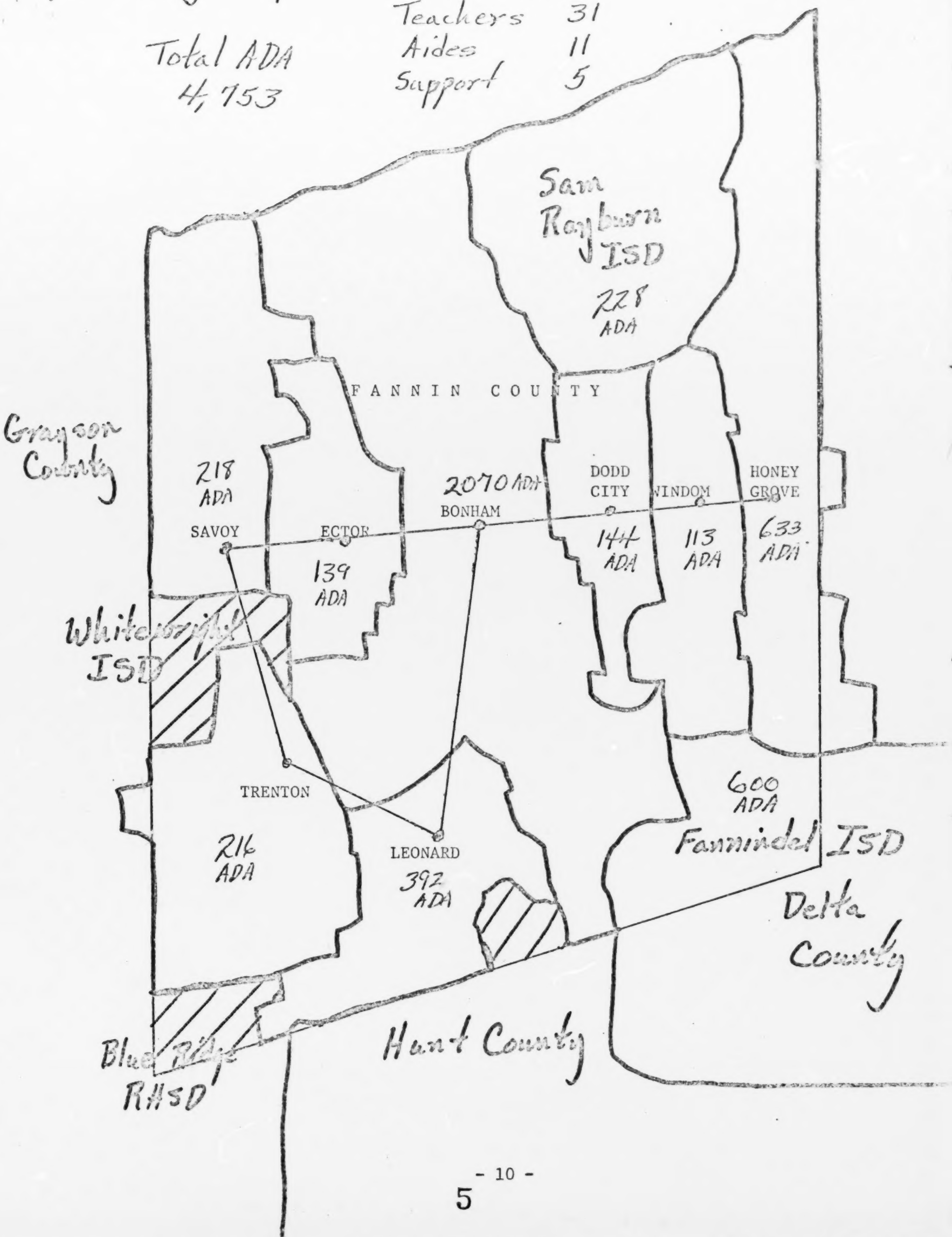
4 Houston County

Fannin County Coop.

Plan "A" 1973-74

Total ADA
4,753

Teachers	31
Aides	11
Support	5



In addition to the above personnel, a pilot Vocational Training Program for Handicapped MR Pupils is operated in a school at Gober, Texas, a defunct school district. A total of 55 pupils between 14-21 CA are enrolled in this program. This pilot program will be closed at the end of this academic year and the students will transfer to a new Bonham area vocational training school recently completed in Bonham, Texas.

The Texas Education Agency and Region X, Education Service Center located in Richardson, Texas have been active in providing leadership personnel, support services, and funding to the Bonham Cooperative Special Education District.

In addition to the services listed above, the Bonham Cooperative Special Education District will have the following programs available to it:

1. Opportunity Learning Centers - Elementary - LD

2. Pre-School - Title I - Disadvantaged

3. Head Start - OEO - Disadvantaged

In Texas, we will need approximately $350,000,000 to fully fund Plan "A" and to secure the services of the 26,000 professional teachers and support personnel that will be necessary to fully implement this program.

Attached is a detailed explanation of Plan "A" that we Texans think is the most exciting plan for the education of exceptional children today. It provides for the development of new models to serve the exceptional children between 3-21 CA in rural and sparsely populated districts and builds in the financial incentive to make school districts move to this plan.

STATE PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

(PLAN A)

COMPREHENSIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (PLAN A)

It is the intent of the State Board of Education that all local school districts operating approved special education programs for execptional children under the Minimum Foundation School Program Act shall provide comprehensive special education programs and services for handicapped pupils between the ages of three and twenty-one years, inclusive, by the school year starting September 1, 1976.

The State Commissioner of Education shall:

- establish rules, regulations, and procedures whereby accredited local school districts may be approved for special education program allocations, and
- determine annually the number of local school districts which may be approved to operate comprehensive special education programs.

The formula for comprehensive special education programs shall be based on the local school district's total average daily attendance for pupils between the ages of six and twenty-one years for the preceding school year.

PERSONNEL ALLOCATIONS

The basic personnel allocation shall be for each 3,000 pupils in ADA and multiples thereof an entitlement of:

20 professional instructional units
7 instructional aide units
3 professional supportive units

For each additional 1,000 pupils in ADA, there may be an additional entitlement of:

6 professional instructional units
2 instructional aide units
1 professional supportive units

School districts who can justify and support on the basis of indentified need for services for exceptional children, may upon the approval of the State Commissioner of Education receive additional allocations.

School districts having less than 3,000 pupils in ADA may develop joint or cooperative porgrams with other districts in providing comprehensive special education programs and services.

School districts having less than 3,000 pupils in ADA where it is not geographically feasible for joint or cooperative programs with other districts may upon the approval of the State Commissioner of Education submit applications for comprehensive special education programs when such applications have been coordinated through the regional education service centers.

Local school districts having within their geographical boundaries facilities serving exceptional children on a statewide basis for whom they (the local school district) wish to provide special education services, may apply for instructional and supportive units on the formula based on "Services to Identified Handicapped Pupils."

Special education unit personnel may be employed and/or utilized on a full-time, part-time, or consultative basis.

APPRAISAL

An allocation not to exceed $25 per pupil based upon 5% of the total ADA for the preceding school year shall be made for pupil appraisal services.

This allotment shall be for initial appraisals as well as reappraisal of pupils considered for or receiving special education services.

The local school district may:

- perform all appraisals and reappraisals by their own qualified staffs or
- perform part of the appraisals and reappraisals by their own qualified staff and part by contracted or consultative services from qualified professional personnel or groups or
- contract or join cooperatively for qualified services for appraisal and reappraisal services with a regional education service center.

For a period not to exceed three school years where a local school district contracts or joins cooperatively with a regional education service center or any tax-supported qualified school service agency for appraisal or reappraisal services, or additional allocation of $10 per pupil shall be made for each handicapped child receiving such services.

SPECIAL MATERIALS

An allotment not to exceed $25 shall be made for the improvement of instruction in special education programs for each eligible handicapped pupil in ADA receiving special education services for the current school year.

This allotment may be utilized only as herein prescribed:

- an amount not to exceed 25% of the allotment may be utilized for consumable materials;
- an amount not to exceed 25% of the allotment may be utilized for support of the "Texas Plan for Special Education Instructional Material Services" through the regional education service centers; and
- the remaining allotment shall be used for special books, instructional media, and other supplies appropriate for instruction for and with indentified handicapped pupils.

Local school districts participating in the "Texas Plan for Special Education Instructional Material Services" through the regional education service centers shall receive an additional allotment of an amount not to exceed $5 per pupil for each pupil receiving special education services.

Under rules and regulations approved by the State Commissioner of Education, the "Texas Plan for Special Education Instructional Material Services" through the regional education service center system shall be developed. It shall be the purpose of this system to:

- provide professional leadership in the evaluation, selection, and developement of special education instructional materials, media, books, and other supplies; and
- provide inservice training for special education personnel in the better utilization of instructional materials, media, books, and other supplies.

Pupils enrolled in special education programs are entitled to the same percentages of adoption free textbooks according to their needs as are other pupils.

TRANSPORTATION

Each special education pupil shall be entitled to transportation services as are other pupils.

A special education pupil's home school shall be considered the school he must attend for special education purposes.

If the pupil can utilize regular transportation and is eligible for regular transportation, such transportation shall be made available to him.

Pupils unable to utilize regular transportation shall be provided special transportation to assist them to receive educational services. the local school district shall:

- establish the pupil's eligibility for special education services;
- establish the pupil's need for special transportation; and
- provide the type and kind of special transportation needed.

An allotment of $150 per year per pupil shall be made for each special education pupil provided special transportation.

Special education transportation funds shall be utilized for no other purpose and shall be accounted for separtely.

SPECIAL SEATS

The school district may be reimbursed up to 50% of the cost for rental, lease, purchase, or other acquisition of equipment classified and approved as special seats for pupils in special education needing such seats.

The approval for reimbursement will be made on a prior approval basis by the Division of Special Education, Texas Education Agency.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SERVICES FOR HOMEBOUND PUPILS

School districts providing electronic communication services to eligible homebound pupils may be reimbursed for up to 50% of actual expenses for installation, service, and rental costs for pupils on homebound service for five or more months of the school year.

The approval for reimbursement will be made on a prior approval basis by the Division of Special Education, Texas Education Agency.

COOPERATIVE AND JOINT AGREEMENTS

Programs operated cooperatively or jointly between two or more school districts will be described in the Comprehensive Planning Document.

One school district contracting with one or more districts for part or all of its programs and services for exceptional children will describe such contractual arrangements in the Comprehensive Planning Document.

CONTRACTS WITH NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The annual application shall include the numbers of pupils by handicapping areas and the names of the approved non-public schools where contracts for services have been negotiated.

Reimbursemant will be made on a pro rata basis if less than 180 days of instruction are provided per year.

ALLOCATION FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES

The local school district may have an additional entitlement of an amount not to exceed 4% of its total payment of operating cost from the Minimum Foundation School Program of special education services based on previous year's expenditure.

Local school districts initiating special education progras may have an additional entitlement of an amount not to exceed 4% of its total payment of operating cost from the Minimum Foundation School Program of special education services bases on the current year's budget.

This allocation shall be used for the purchase of consultative service for the district's comprehensive special education program.

The approved plan of expenditures shall include:

- special consultants as needed in working with individual handicapped pupils;
- special consultants as needed in special education instructional or curricular services; and
- special consultants as needed for evaluation and planning of special education services, both on a local and regional level.

At least 50% of the amount allocated for consultative services shall be used cooperatively with the regional education service center.